Archie
ADVENTURE SERIES
NO. 103
US $1.99
CAN $2.39
THE WORLD'S MOST WAY PAST COOL COMIC!
SONIC
THE HEDGEHOG
SEGA
QUANTUM LEAP
DIRECT EDITION
10 SONIC

WELCOME TO A BUSY INTERSECTION ALONG THE COSMIC INTERSTATE. I AM ZONIC, THE ZONE COP. I COME FROM A PERPENDICULAR ZONE WHICH PASSES THROUGH EVERY OTHER PARALLEL DIMENSION.

IT IS MY SWORN DUTY TO PATROL AND OBSERVE THE VARIANT INCARNATIONS OF A SPECIAL SPINY SOMEONE.

MY PRIMARY FOCUS IS HISTORY'S MOST PIVOTAL HERO, SONIC PRIME, THE TRUE BLUE HEDGEHOG OF ALL REALITIES.

ZAP!...

BUT THERE ARE COUNTLESS VERSIONS OF SONIC IN ALTERNATE DIMENSIONS... SUCH AS THE ONE I'M ABOUT TO VISIT WITH YOU—

SONIC THE HEDGEHOG (ISSN 1070-0390), No. 169, Jan., 2002. Published every 4 weeks, twice in May by Archie Comic Publications, Inc., 325 Fayette Avenue, Mamaroneck, NY 10543-2318. Richard H. Goldwater, President and Co-Publisher, Michael I. Silberkleit, Chairman and Co-Publisher. Single copies $1.99 in the U.S., $2.39 in Canada. Subscription rate: U.S. $25.87 for 13 issues, $31.87 in Canada. All Canadian orders payable in U.S. funds. © SEGA CORPORATION 2001. All Rights Reserved. SEGA, DREAMCAST, the Dreamcast logo, Sonic The Hedgehog, and all related characters are trademarks or registered trademarks of SEGA CORPORATION or its affiliates. The product is manufactured under license from Sega of America Dreamcast, Inc., P.O. Box 7639, San Francisco, CA 94120-7639. www.sega.com. Any similarities between characters, names, persons, and/or institutions in this book and any living, dead, or fictional characters, names, persons, and/or institutions are not intended and if they exist, are purely coincidental. Periodicals postage paid at the post office at Mamaroneck, New York and at additional mailing offices. Title registered in U.S. patent office. POSTMASTER, send address changes to SONIC THE HEDGEHOG, c/o Archie Comic Publications, Inc., 325 Fayette Avenue, Mamaroneck, NY 10543-2318. Printed in Canada

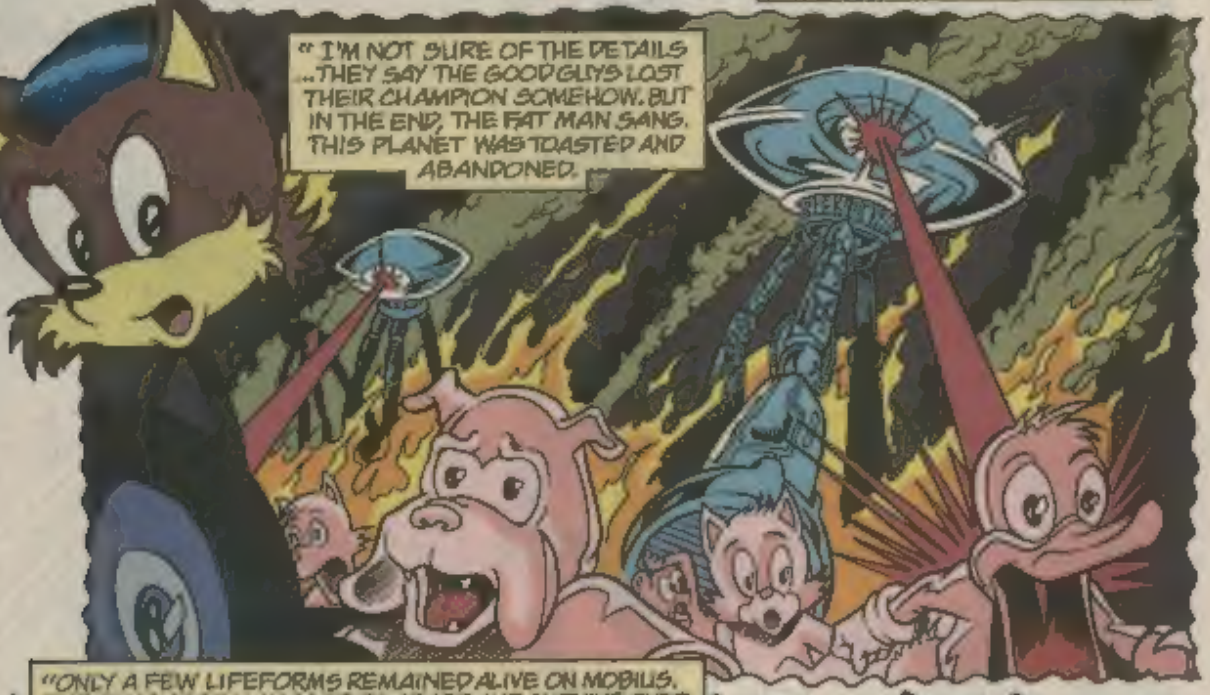
ZOOB
WE HAVE TRAVELED A FULL MILLENNIUM FORWARD IN TIME TO A DIVERGENT FUTURE. IT IS THE YEAR 4235 AND THIS IS MOBIUS. OR RATHER, WHAT REMAINS OF IT ONE THOUSAND YEARS AFTER "THE WAR OF THE WORLD" ALMOST OBLITERATED IT.
MOBIUS IS STILL A RAVAGED HUSK, BARELY CAPABLE OF SUSTAINING LIFE IN CERTAIN ISOLATED AREAS. HARDLY A PLACE ANYONE WOULD CHOOSE TO VISIT AND YET...
CH-
WOK
NO METEOR CAUSES A SONIC BOOM LIKE THAT! I'LL BET THAT WAS SOME KIND OF INCOMING SPACECRAFT! I'LL CHECK IT OUT...
I WAS RIGHT --A STRANGER'S COME TO TOWN... MY TOWN!

I...I'VE LANDED! BUT CAN THIS TRULY BE...HOME?
WHOA! GOT TO GET MY LAND LEGS. I'M GLAD MY CONFINEMENT SUIT COMPENSATES FOR THIS ACRID ATMOSPHERE...
YOU DON'T SMELL SO GOOD YOURSELF, INTRUDER! HOW LONG SINCE YOU WASHED THOSE NASTY THREADS?
FREEDOM FIGHTERS OF THE GALAXY
PART ONE, CHAPTER ONE
MICHAEL GALLAGHER-WRITER JIM VALENTINO-PENCILLER
HARVO-INKER VICKIE WILLIAMS-LETTERER STEPHANIE VOZZO-COLORIST
JUSTIN GABRIE-EDITOR/ART DIRECTOR VICTOR GORELICK-MANAGING EDITOR
RICHARD GOLDWATER-EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

DON'T "DIS" MY SUIT, PAL! IT ALLOWS ME TO FOCUS AND FIRE MY SPEED POWER AS A BOLT OF PSYCHO-KINETIC ENERGY!
FTOW!
PUNCH!
I DIDN'T COME HERE TO FIGHT YOU! I JUST NEED INFORMATION. HOW LONG HAVE I BEEN GONE FROM MOBIUS? TEN YEARS?.. MAYBE TWENTY?
WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT? WHO ARE YOU?
"IT WAS 3235. ROBOTNIK TRICKED ME INTO THINKING SALLY WAS INSIDE A POD WHICH TURNED OUT TO BE A ROCKETSHIP! HE LAUNCHED ME INTO DEEP SPACE!
"ONCE BEYOND THE SOLAR SYSTEM, I BEGAN TO RUN OUT OF AIR AND I WAS PICKED UP BY A RACE OF GYPSY ALIENS CALLED THE PEARLMEN. THEY SAVED ME BY FITTING ME WITH THIS LIFE-SUSTAINING SUIT, BUT WANTED NOTHING MORE TO DO WITH ME.
"I TRIED TO COMMUNICATE WITH THEM, BUT IT WAS NO USE. THE PEARLMEN PUT ME IN SUSPENDED ANIMATION AND JETTISONED ME IN A SHUTTLE CAPSULE. I'VE BEEN DRIFTING EVER SINCE. HOW LONG HAS IT BEEN? I MUST KNOW!"

YOU ASKED FOR IT, MAN... YOU'VE BEEN AWAY FOR A THOUSAND YEARS!
GASP! W-WUH- WHAT?!

"EASY, PAL! YOU'RE LUCKY I SPEND SOME TIME AT THE OLD DOC-CHIP LIBRARY! I KNOW A LITTLE ANCIENT HISTORY. DIDN'T YOU JUST SAY "3235?" THAT'S THE YEAR--what's his name--IVOTNIK? HE BEGAN THE WAR OF THE WORLD!


"I'M NOT SURE OF THE DETAILS ...THEY SAY THE GOOD GUYS LOST THEIR CHAMPION SOMEHOW. BUT IN THE END, THE FAT MAN SANG. THIS PLANET WAS TOASTED AND ABANDONED.

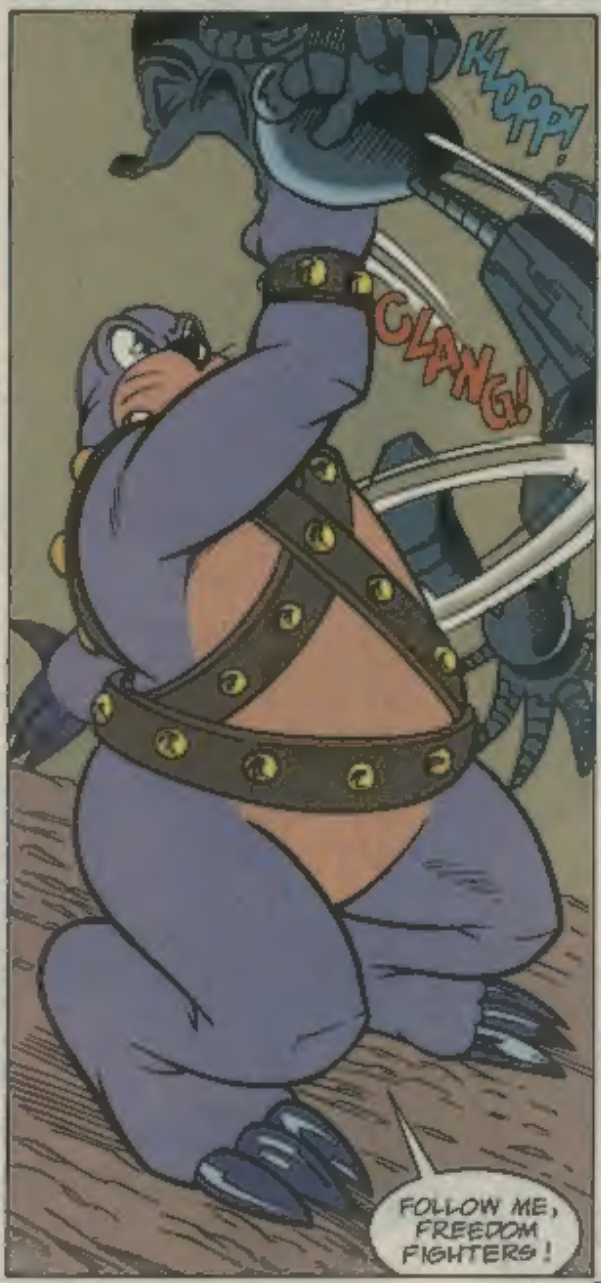
"ONLY A FEW LIFEFORMS REMAINED ALIVE ON MOBIUS. THE TOUGHEST MANAGED TO ADAPT AND SURVIVE OVER THE CENTURIES...LIKE MY INHUMUTANT ANCESTORS. THAT'S WHY I'M HERE...CALL ME TAILON!"
NICE TO MEET YOU... I'M SONIC THE ULP! THOUSAND-YEAR-OLD HEDGEHOG! IS ANYONE ELSE AROUND?

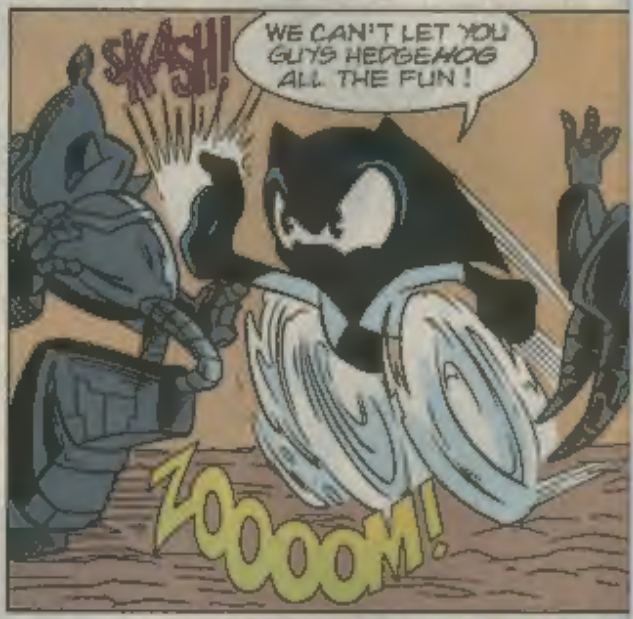
JUST THE LOCAL BRASS KNUCKLES, BUT THEY'RE NOT VERY NICE!
THE WHO-- WHOA!
THOW!
IT'S JUST A SMALL GANG OF THEM. THERE'S THOUSANDS OF RENEGADE ROBOTS LIKE THESE ALL OVER THE CITY!
TELL YOU WHAT-- SET ME DOWN OVER THERE AND WE'LL TAKE 'EM DOWN!
IT'S BEEN A THOUSAND YEARS SINCE I RUMBLED! I'M ITCHIN' TO GO!
LET'S DO IT!

OH, YEAH! I HAVEN'T LOST A STEP!
INCOMING!
Bing! Bong!
SOMETIMES THERE'S NO NEED FOR SPEED!
SKA CHAMM!
UH-OH! LOOKS LIKE THAT WAS JUST A RECON UNIT...
HERE COMES THE CAVALRY!
HUNDREDS OF THEM! WHAT SHOULD WE DO?
STAND FAST! WE'LL TAKE IT FROM HERE!
HUH?...
WHO'S THAT?...

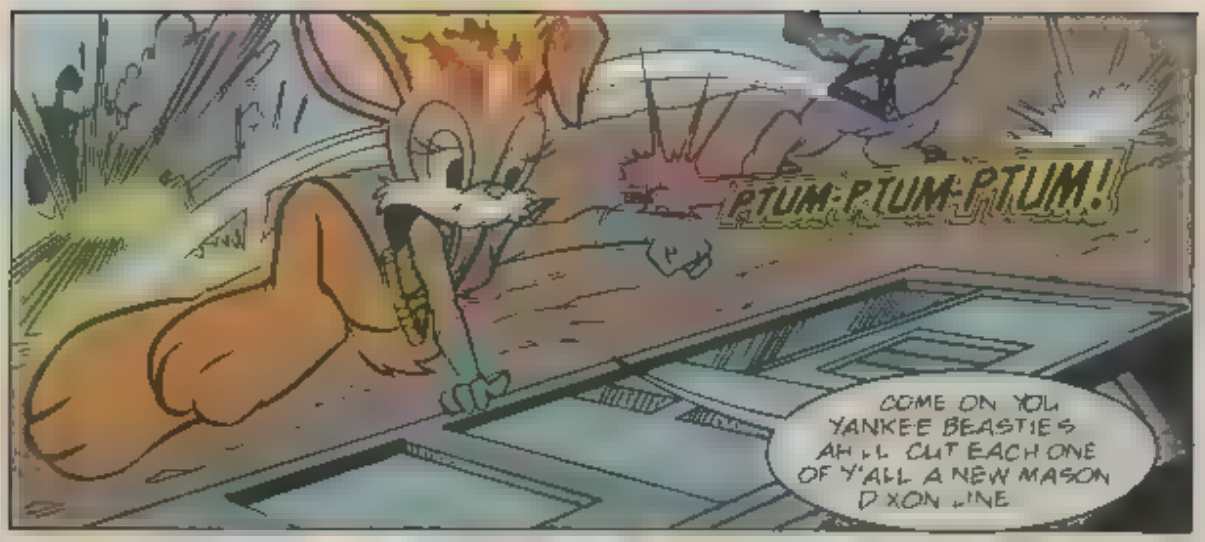
WE'RE THE FREEDOM FIGHTERS OF THE GALAXY, AND THIS IS OUR SHIP, UPDOCK! MY NAME'S CAPTAIN ROTOR-27!
GREETINGS, I AM SALETA!
HEY, Y'ALL! CALL ME BUNNI!
ZEY CALL ME 'TWAN-DU!
AND I AM HAWKHAWK-- STAND ASIDE!

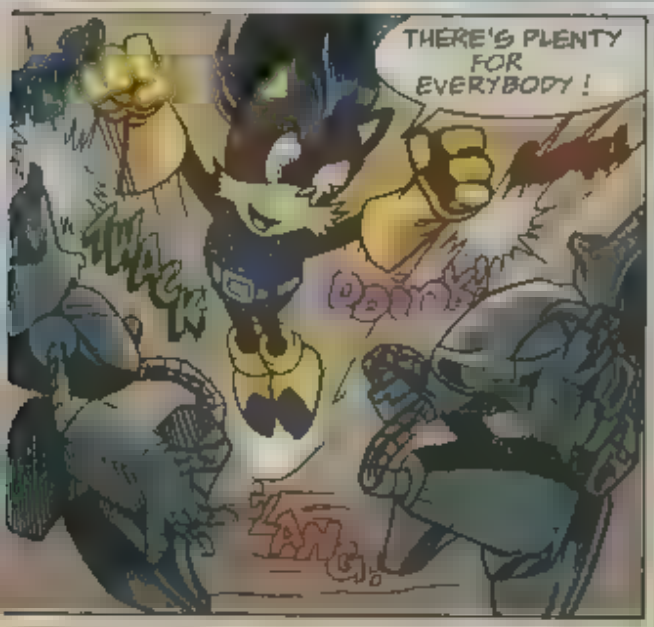
WITHIN MY BEAK DWELLS ALL INFORMATION, THAT IS WHY I AM CALLED "THE-ONE-WHO'S-NOSE-KNOWS!" THAT MEANS I CAN TRANSMIT THE ELECTRONIC SELF-DESTRUCT CODE TO THESE UNITS! VICTORY IS OURS!
BLAM!
KOOM!
FZZZZT-POP!
whump!

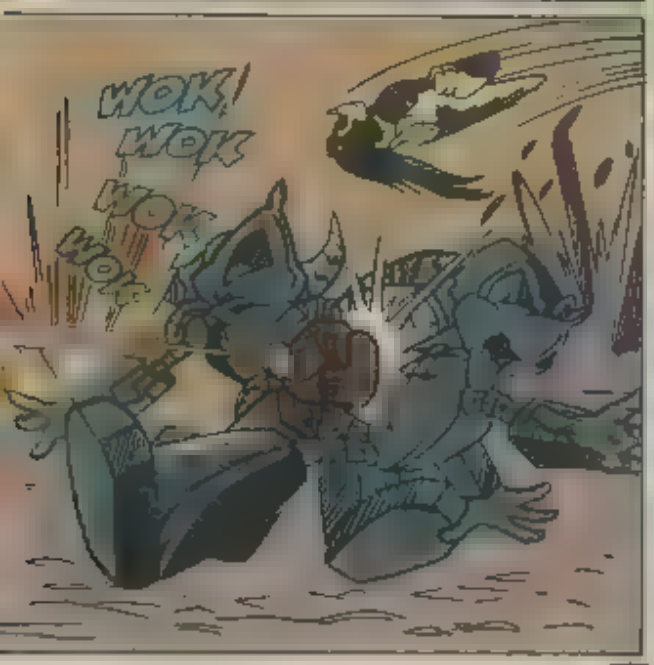

KLOPPY
CLANG!
FOLLOW ME, FREEDOM FIGHTERS!

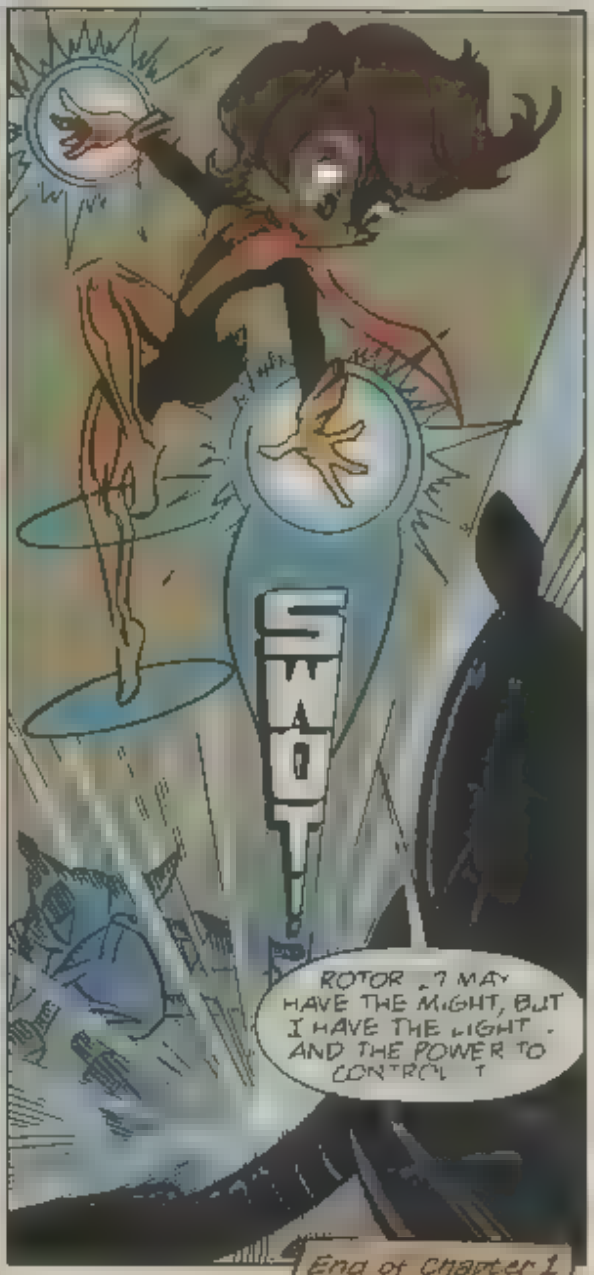

SKASH!
WE CAN'T LET YOU GUYS HEDGEHOG ALL THE FUN!
ZOOOOM!

I'M SURE ZIS HAS BEEN A ARROWING EXPERIENCE FOR ALL OF YOU!









End of Chapter 1

SO, WHEN A SOLAR SYSTEM SCAN REVEALED YOUR SPACE CAPSULE'S ENERGY TRAIL WE FOLLOWED IT TO THIS LANDING SITE HERE ON MOBIUS

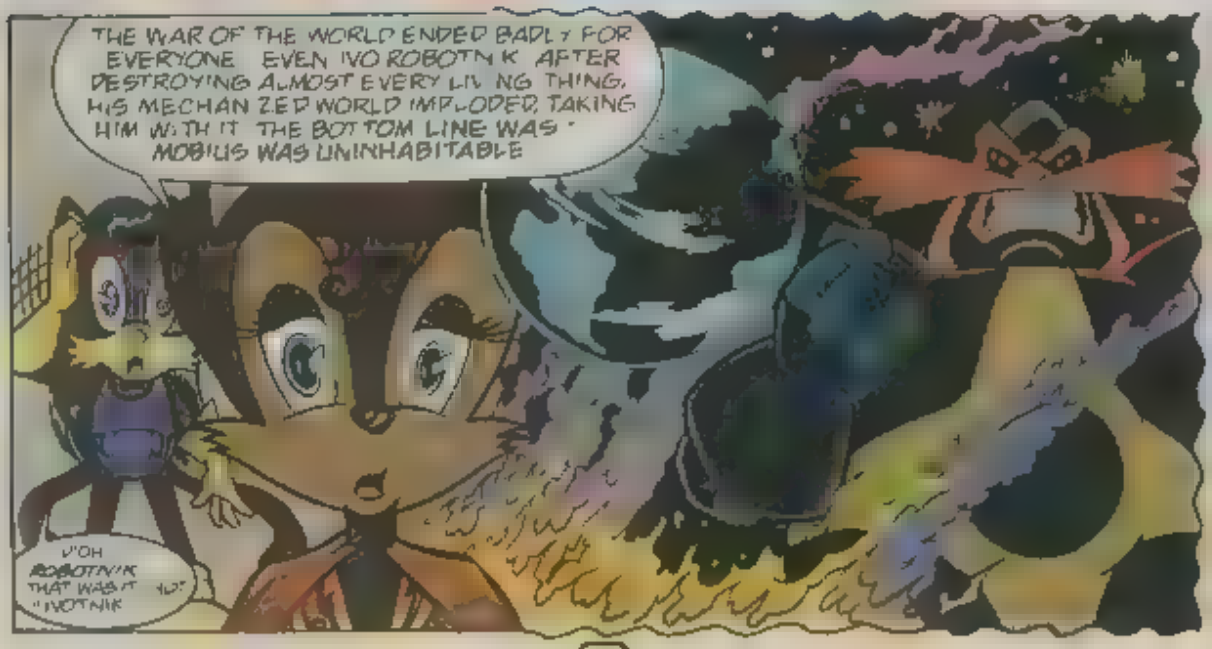
AH DIDN'T THINK WE'D FIND A BOLL WEEVIL ALIVE ON THIS SCORCHED MARBLE, LET ALONE A FULL GROWN FOX

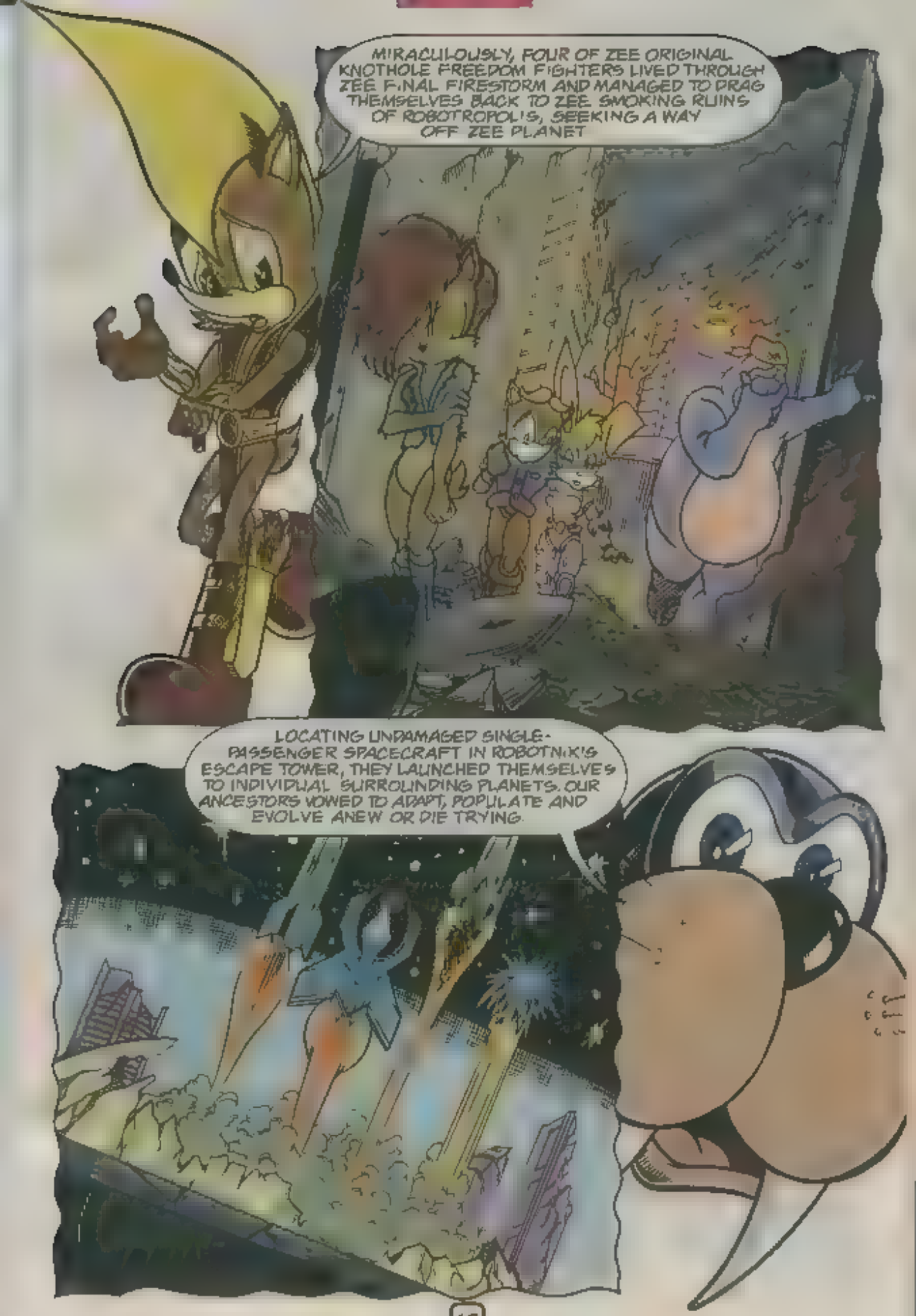
YOU GOTTA TELL ME HOW YOU GET YOUR HAIR TO DO THAT, SCARLETT O'HARE!

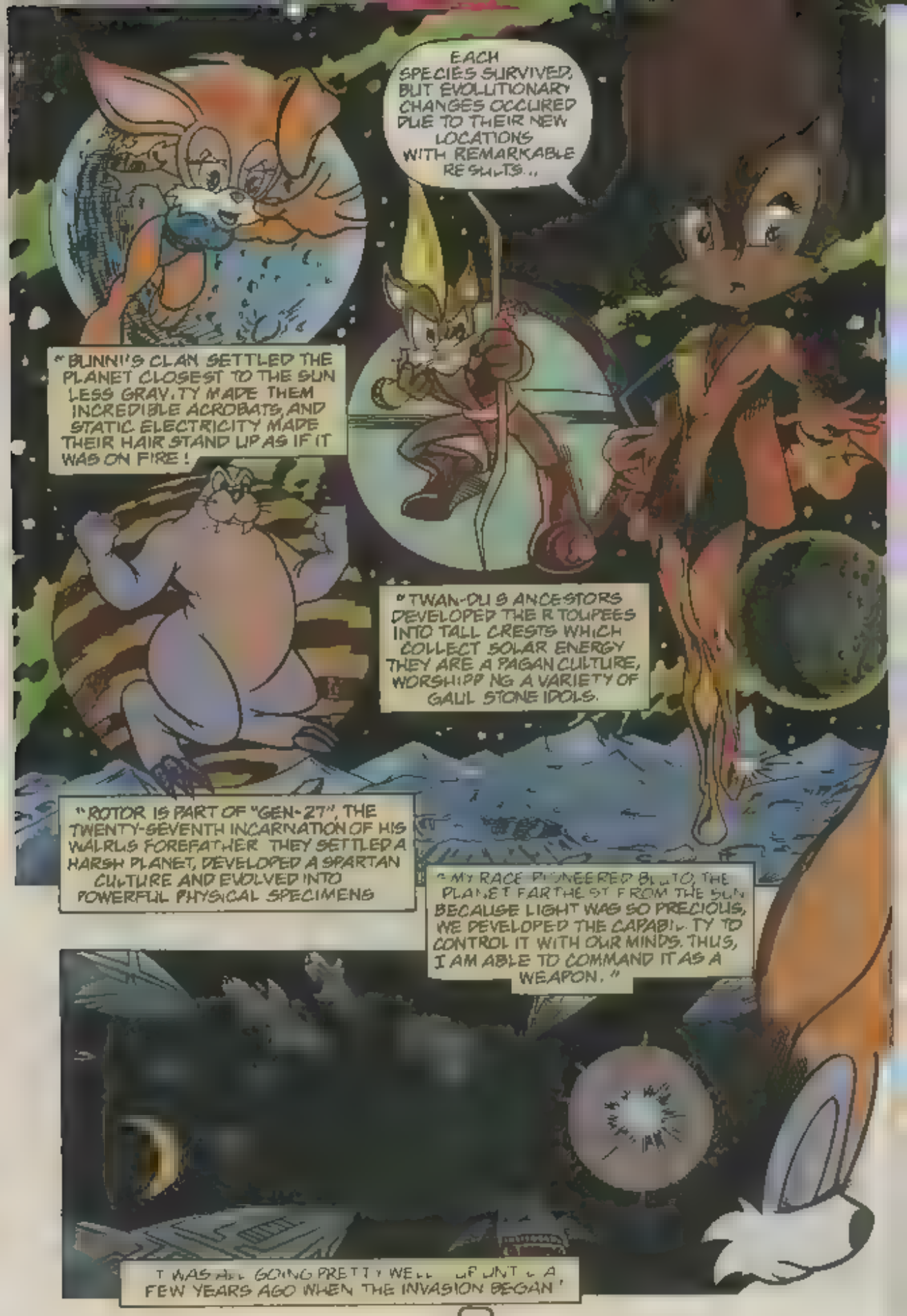
I THINK A QUICK HISTORY LESSON ABOUT OUR TEAM IS IN ORDER

FREEDOM FIGHTERS OF THE GALAXY

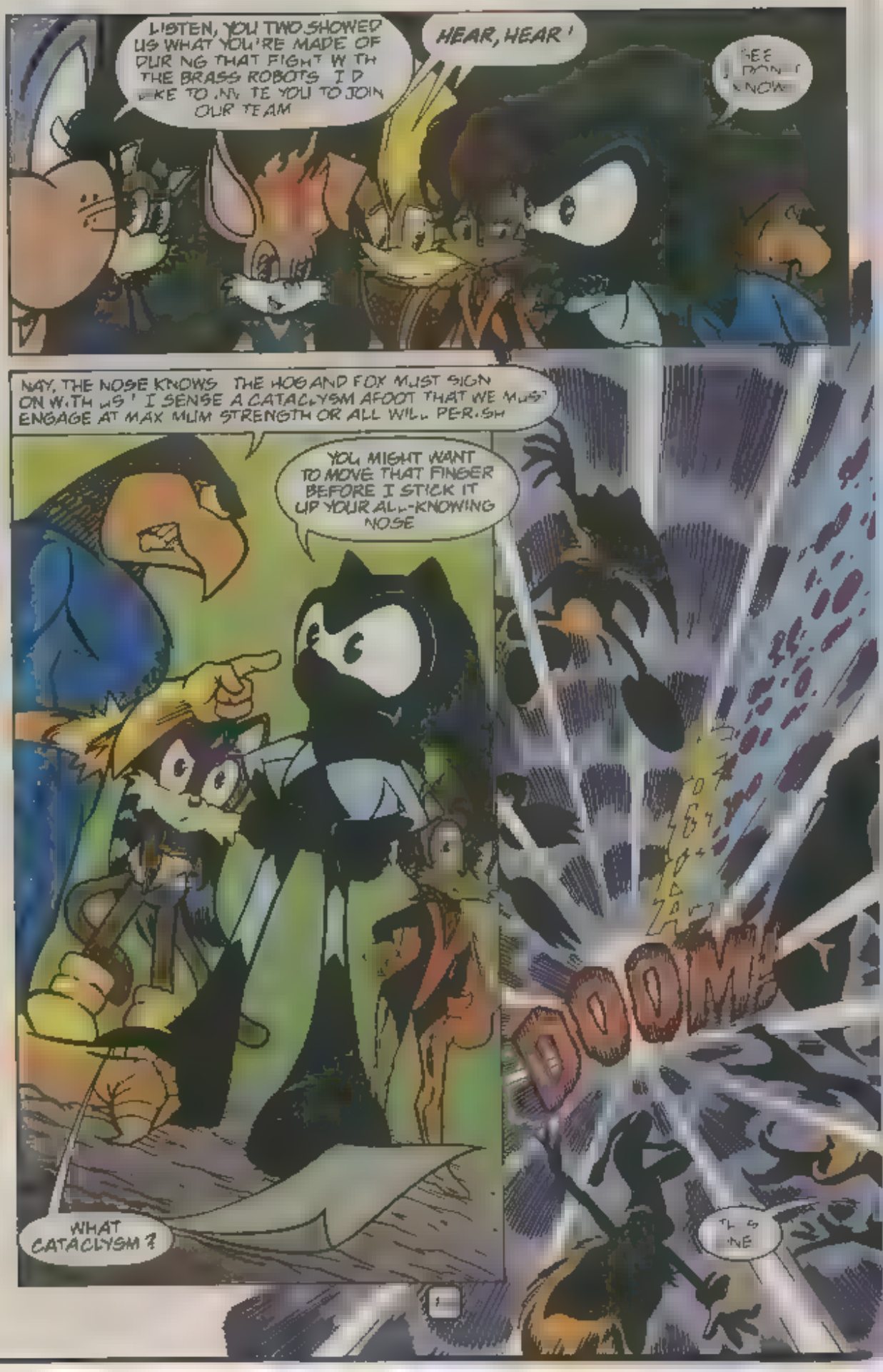
CHAPTER TWO

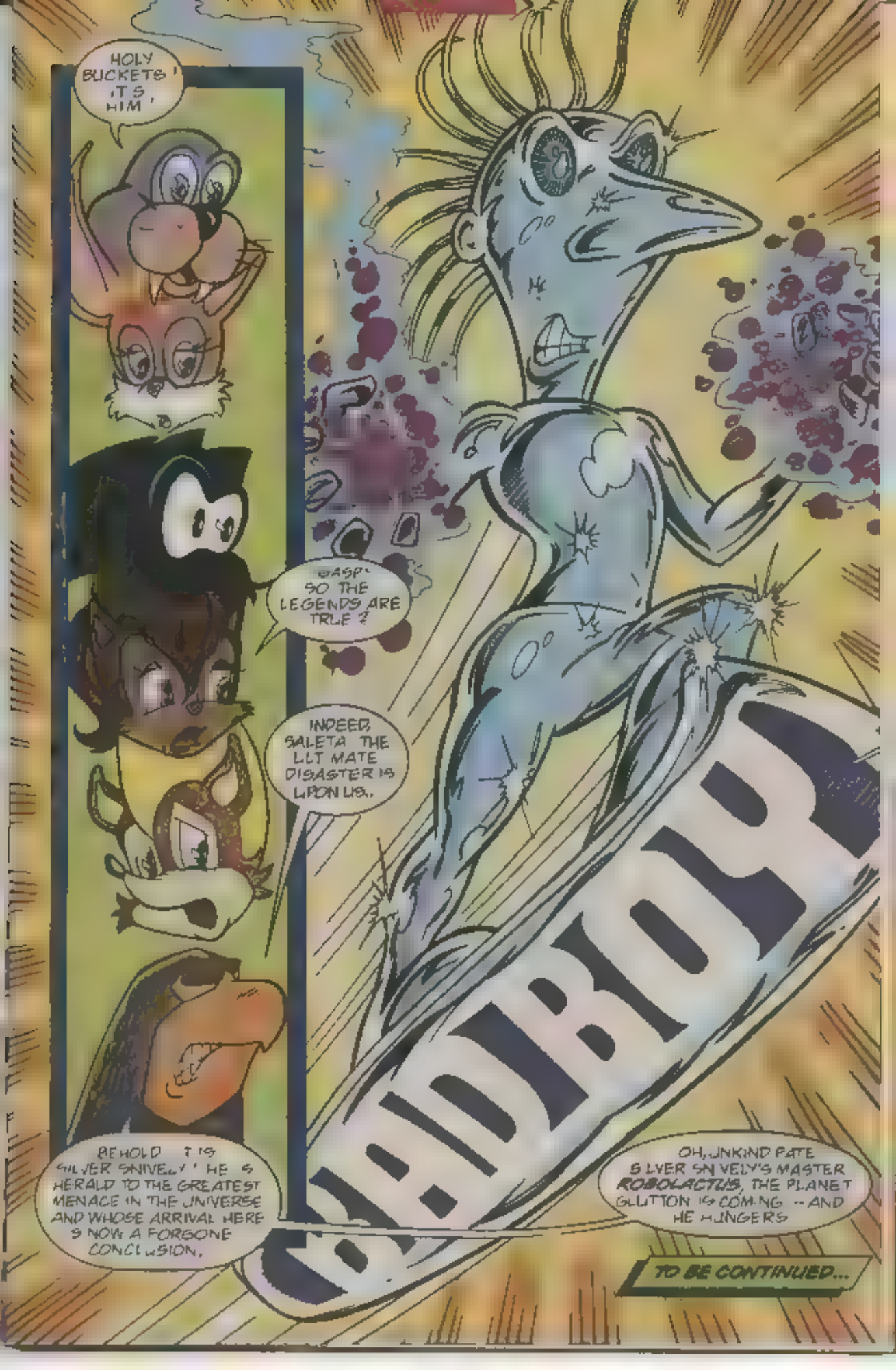


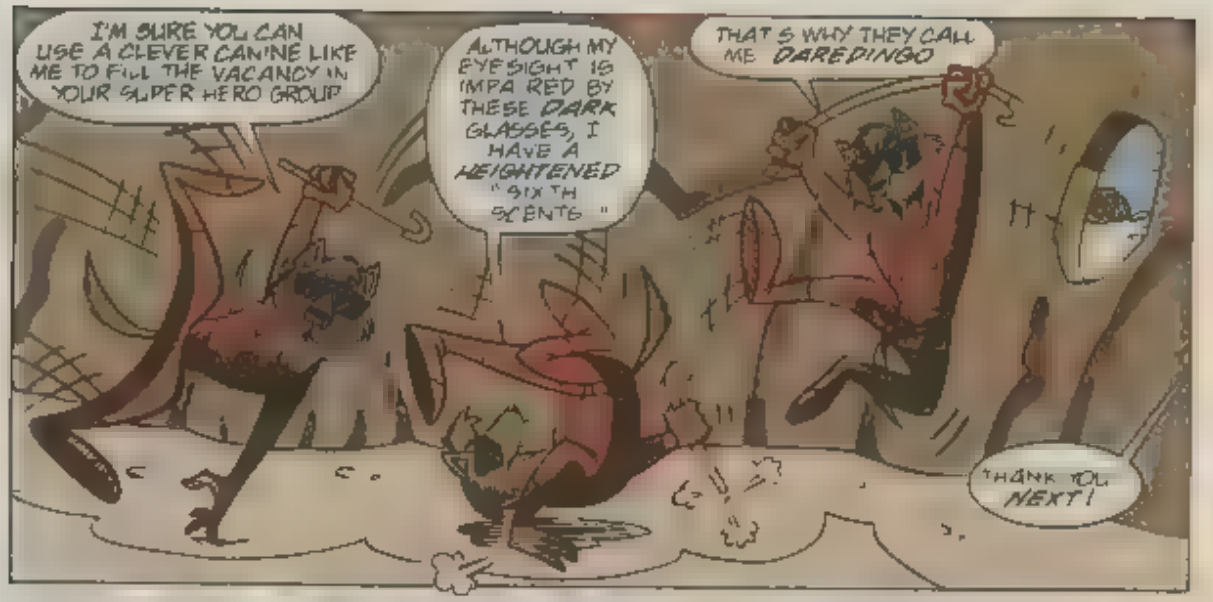

MIRACULOUSLY, FOUR OF ZEE ORIGINAL KNOTHOLE FREEDOM FIGHTERS LIVED THROUGH ZEE FINAL FIRESTORM AND MANAGED TO DRAG THEMSELVES BACK TO ZEE SMOKING RUINS OF ROBOTROPOLIS, SEEKING A WAY OFF ZEE PLANET
LOCATING UNDAMAGED SINGLE-PASSENGER SPACECRAFT IN ROBOTNIK'S ESCAPE TOWER, THEY LAUNCHED THEMSELVES TO INDIVIDUAL SURROUNDING PLANETS. OUR ANCESTORS VOWED TO ADAPT, POPULATE AND EVOLVE ANEW OR DIE TRYING.

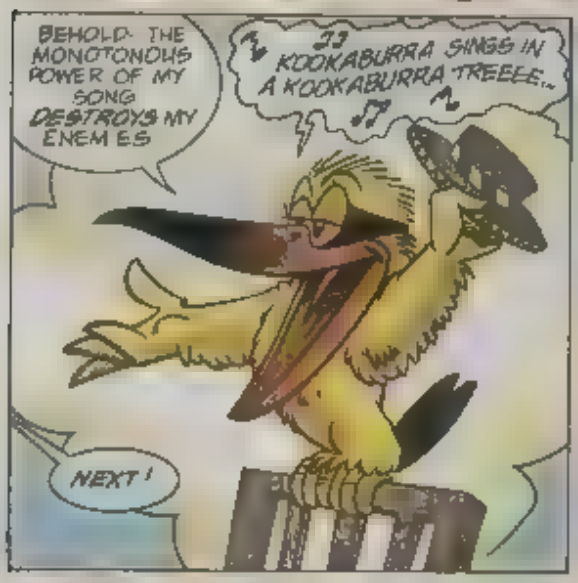

EACH SPECIES SURVIVED, BUT EVOLUTIONARY CHANGES OCCURED DUE TO THEIR NEW LOCATIONS WITH REMARKABLE RESULTS...
"BUNNI'S CLAN SETTLED THE PLANET CLOSEST TO THE SUN LESS GRAVITY MADE THEM INCREDIBLE ACROBATS, AND STATIC ELECTRICITY MADE THEIR HAIR STAND UP AS IF IT WAS ON FIRE!
"TWAN-DU'S ANCESTORS DEVELOPED THE R TOUPEES INTO TALL CRESTS WHICH COLLECT SOLAR ENERGY THEY ARE A PAGAN CULTURE, WORSHIPPING A VARIETY OF GAUL STONE IDOLS.
"ROTOR IS PART OF "GEN-27", THE TWENTY-SEVENTH INCARNATION OF HIS WALRUS FOREFATHER THEY SETTLED A HARSH PLANET, DEVELOPED A SPARTAN CULTURE AND EVOLVED INTO POWERFUL PHYSICAL SPECIMENS
"MY RACE PIONEERED BUTO, THE PLANET FARTHEST FROM THE SUN BECAUSE LIGHT WAS SO PRECIOUS, WE DEVELOPED THE CAPABILITY TO CONTROL IT WITH OUR MINDS. THUS, I AM ABLE TO COMMAND IT AS A WEAPON."
IT WAS ALL GOING PRETTY WELL UPUNTIL A FEW YEARS AGO WHEN THE INVASION BEGAN!

IN THE MOST OUTRAGEOUS MILITARY MOVE SINCE SHERMAN'S MARCH TO THE SEA, OUR SOLAR SYSTEM WAS OVERRUN BY A MERCILESS RACE OF FISH-LIKE CREATURES CALLED THE SHARK! *
* THE SHARK WERE UNWITTINGLY CREATED BY THE FORTY FATHOM'S FREEDOM FIGHTERS WHEN THEY LAUNCHED A SPACESHIP FULL OF THEIR HYDROTECHNOLOGY DURING THE WAR OF THE WORLD. BUT THAT'S ANOTHER STORY - ONE THAT YOU'RE WELCOME TO WRITE TO US AT SONIC GRAMS AND RESULT
AFTAIR THEIR FEEDING FRENZY OF GENOCIDE WAS COMPLETE, ZEE SHARK LEFT LEETLE DID THEY KNOW ZAT ONE MEMBER OF EACH PLANET HAD SURVIVED THEIR CAMPAIGN OF TERROR
THE MYSTERIOUS AND DOWNRIGHT UNFRIENDLY HAWKHAWK SCOUTED AND ORGANIZED US WE FORMED A TEAM, PLEDGING TO DEFEND ANYONE ANYWHERE AGAINST EVIL AGGRESSION WE CALL OURSELVES THE FREEDOM FIGHTERS OF THE GALAXY!

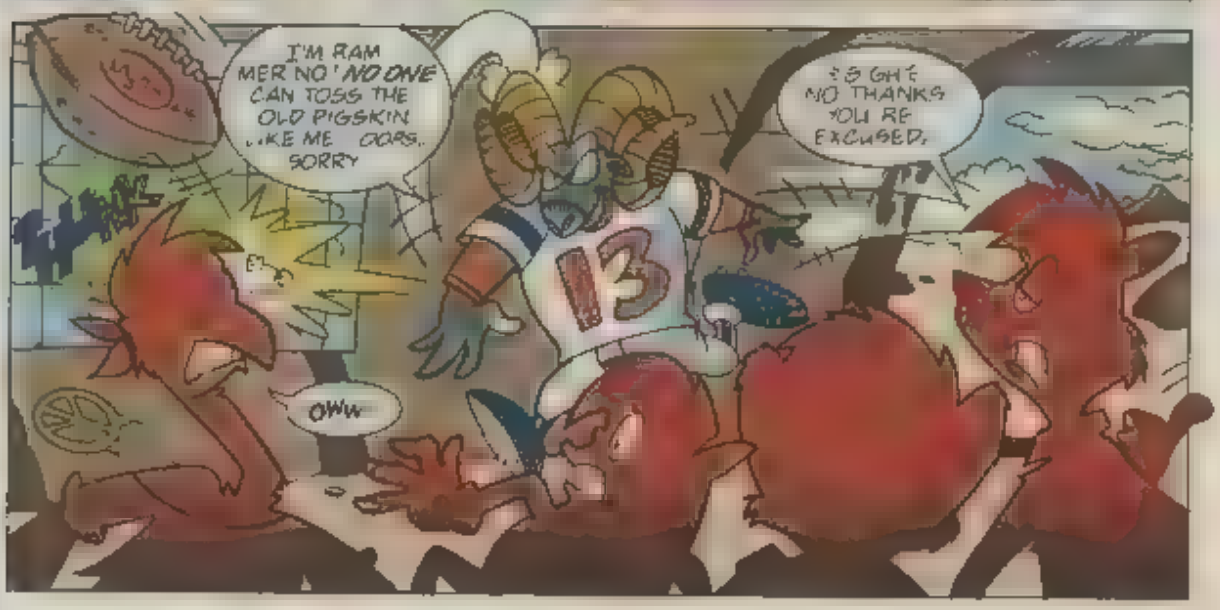

LISTEN, YOU TWO SHOWED US WHAT YOU'RE MADE OF DURING THAT FIGHT WITH THE BRASS ROBOTS I'D LIKE TO INVITE YOU TO JOIN OUR TEAM
HEAR, HEAR!
NAY, THE NOSE KNOWS THE HOG AND FOX MUST SIGN ON WITH US! I SENSE A CATACLYSM AFOOT THAT WE MUST ENGAGE AT MAXIMUM STRENGTH OR ALL WILL PERISH
YOU MIGHT WANT TO MOVE THAT FINGER BEFORE I STICK IT UP YOUR ALL-KNOWING NOSE
WHAT CATACLYSM?
DOOM!

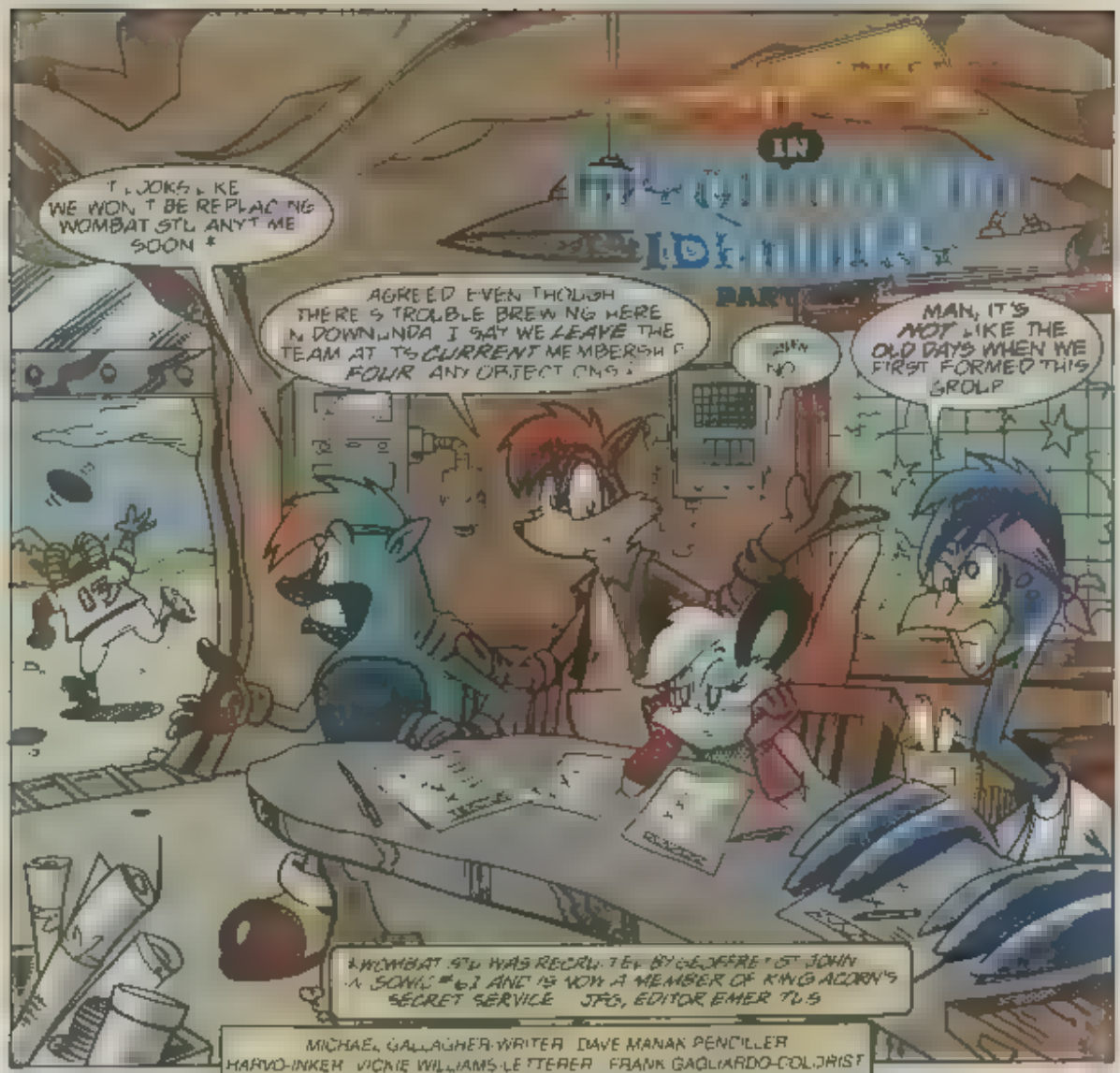

HOLY BUCKETS! IT'S HIM!
GASP! SO THE LEGENDS ARE TRUE?
INDEED, SALETA. THE ULTIMATE DISASTER IS UPON US.
BEHOLD! IT'S SILVER SNIVELY! HE'S HERALD TO THE GREATEST MENACE IN THE UNIVERSE AND WHOSE ARRIVAL HERE IS NOW A FORGONE CONCLUSION.
OH, UNKIND FATE! SILVER SNIVELY'S MASTER ROBOLACTUS, THE PLANET GLUTTON IS COMING -- AND HE HUNGERS
TO BE CONTINUED...

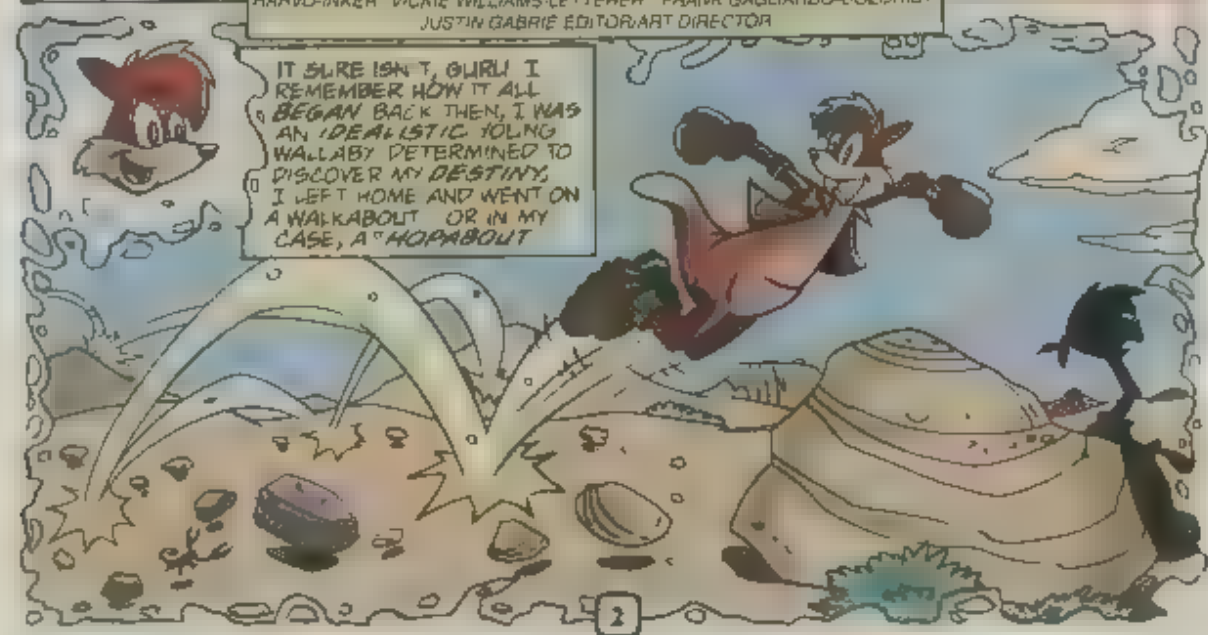

I'M SURE YOU CAN USE A CLEVER CANINE LIKE ME TO FILL THE VACANCY IN YOUR SUPER HERO GROUP
ALTHOUGH MY EYESIGHT IS IMPAIRED BY THESE DARK GLASSES, I HAVE A HEIGHTENED "SIXTH SCENTS"
THAT'S WHY THEY CALL ME DAREDINGO
THANK YOU NEXT!


BEHOLD THE MONOTONOUS POWER OF MY SONG DESTROYS MY ENEMIES
♪♪ KOOKABURRA SINGS IN A KOOKABURRA TREEEE... ♪♪
NEXT!

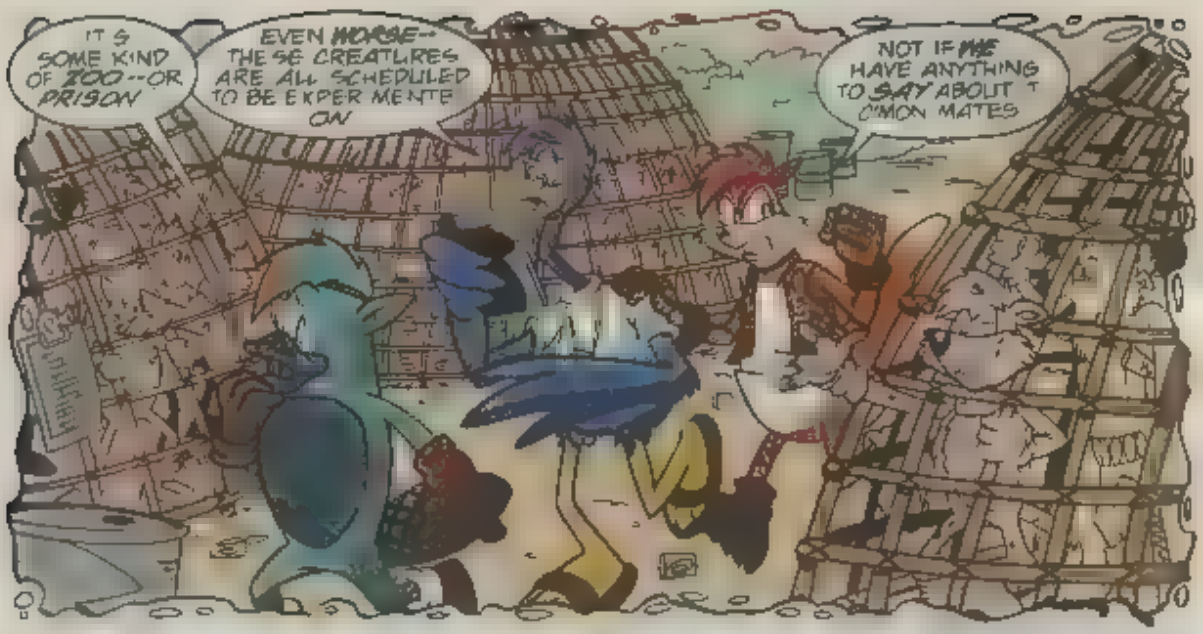
ALTHOUGH I AM NOT A NATIVE TO DOWNUNDA, I HAVE BEEN LIVING HERE FOR YEARS MY APPLICATION FOR A GREEN CARD
SORRY WE DON'T NEED THE LEGAL HASSLES NEXT

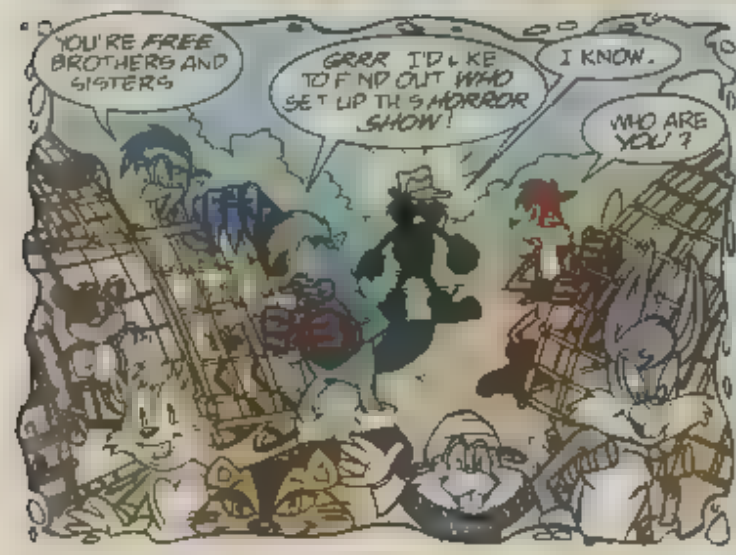

I'M RAMMER NO! NO ONE CAN TOSS THE OLD PIGSKIN LIKE ME OOPS, SORRY
OWW
13
SIGH! NO THANKS YOU'RE EXCUSED.

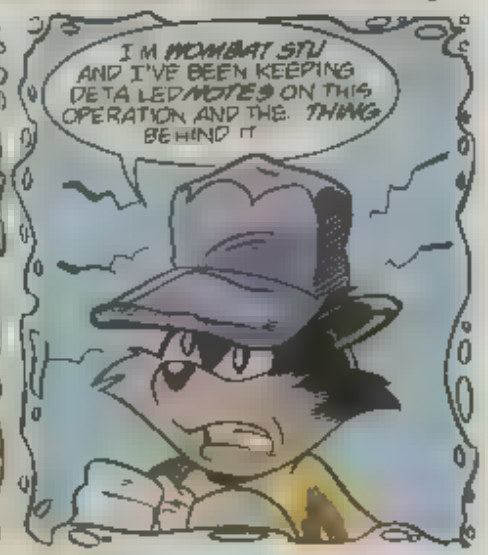

IN
PART
LOOKS LIKE WE WON'T BE REPLACING WOMBAT STU ANYTIME SOON.
AGREED EVEN THOUGH THERE'S TROUBLE BREWING HERE IN DOWNUNDA I SAY WE LEAVE THE TEAM AT ITS CURRENT MEMBERSHIP FOUR ANY OBJECTIONS?
NO
MAN, IT'S NOT LIKE THE OLD DAYS WHEN WE FIRST FORMED THIS GROUP
WOMBAT STU WAS RECRUITED BY GEOFFREY ST. JOHN IN SONIC #61 AND IS NOW A MEMBER OF KING ACORN'S SECRET SERVICE. JPG, EDITOR EMERITUS
MICHAEL GALLAGHER-WRITER DAVE MANAK-PENCILLER HARVO-INKER VICKIE WILLIAMS-LETTERER FRANK GAGLIARDO-COLORIST JUSTIN GABRIE EDITOR/ART DIRECTOR

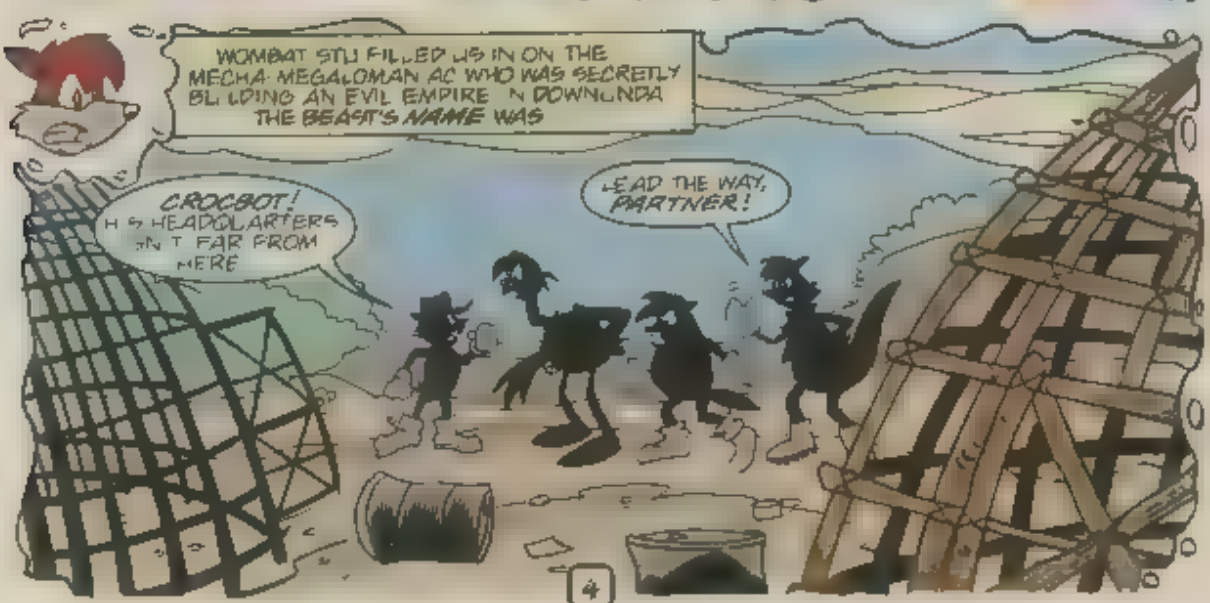

IT SURE ISN'T, GURU! I REMEMBER HOW IT ALL BEGAN BACK THEN. I WAS AN IDEALISTIC YOUNG WALLABY DETERMINED TO DISCOVER MY DESTINY. I LEFT HOME AND WENT ON A WALKABOUT. OR IN MY CASE, A "HOPABOUT.

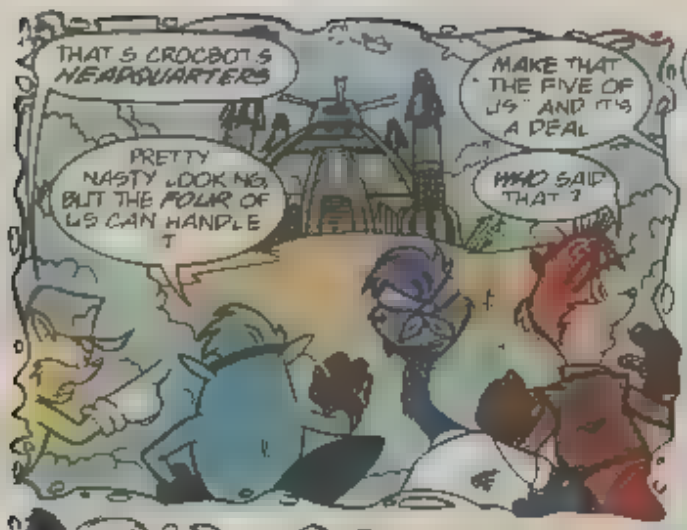
THAT'S WHEN I FIRST RAN INTO YOU AND I MEAN THAT LITERALLY
OOOF! SORRY ABOUT THAT!
THUMP!
Unngh HEAVY
AW, C'MON, MATE! I DON'T WEIGH THAT MUCH..
NO, I MEAN IT'S HEAVY THAT I WAS JUST ASKING THE GREAT SPIRIT TO SHOW ME A SIGN AND YOU CAME ALONG. WE'RE MEANT TO MEET MY MAN.
WE TALKED AND WALKED FOR SEVERAL DAYS, GETTING TO KNOW EACH OTHER AND GETTING VERY THIRSTY
AT LAST A BILLABONG
CAREFULL SOMETHING'S MOVING UNDER THE SURFACE.
SPLOOOP!
IT'S A PLATYPUS.
CALL ME BILL FELLAS.
BILLFELLAS. WHAT A COOL NICKNAME
I HAD RECENTLY HEARD RUMORS OF ILLEGAL ACTIVITY NEARBY. WE DECIDED TO INVESTIGATE.
SNIFF SNIFF! SOMETHING SMELLS FUNNY
THERE'S NOTHING FUNNY ABOUT INDUSTRIAL SMELLS IN OUR PRISTINE ENVIRONMENT
HOLY KOSCIUSKO LOOK UP AHEAD

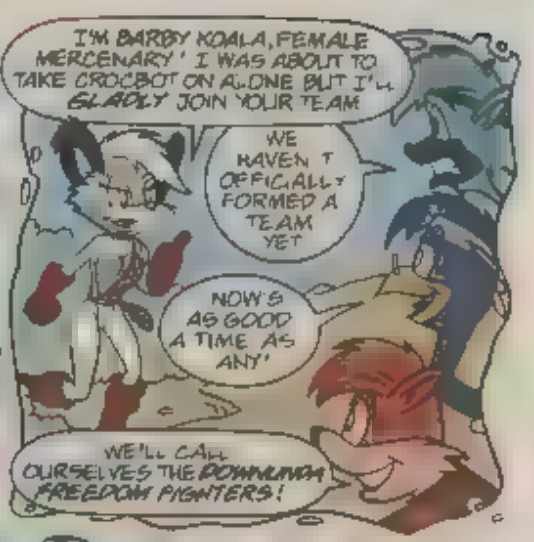

IT'S SOME KIND OF ZOO--OR PRISON
EVEN WORSE-- THESE CREATURES ARE ALL SCHEDULED TO BE EXPERIMENTED ON
NOT IF WE HAVE ANYTHING TO SAY ABOUT IT C'MON MATES

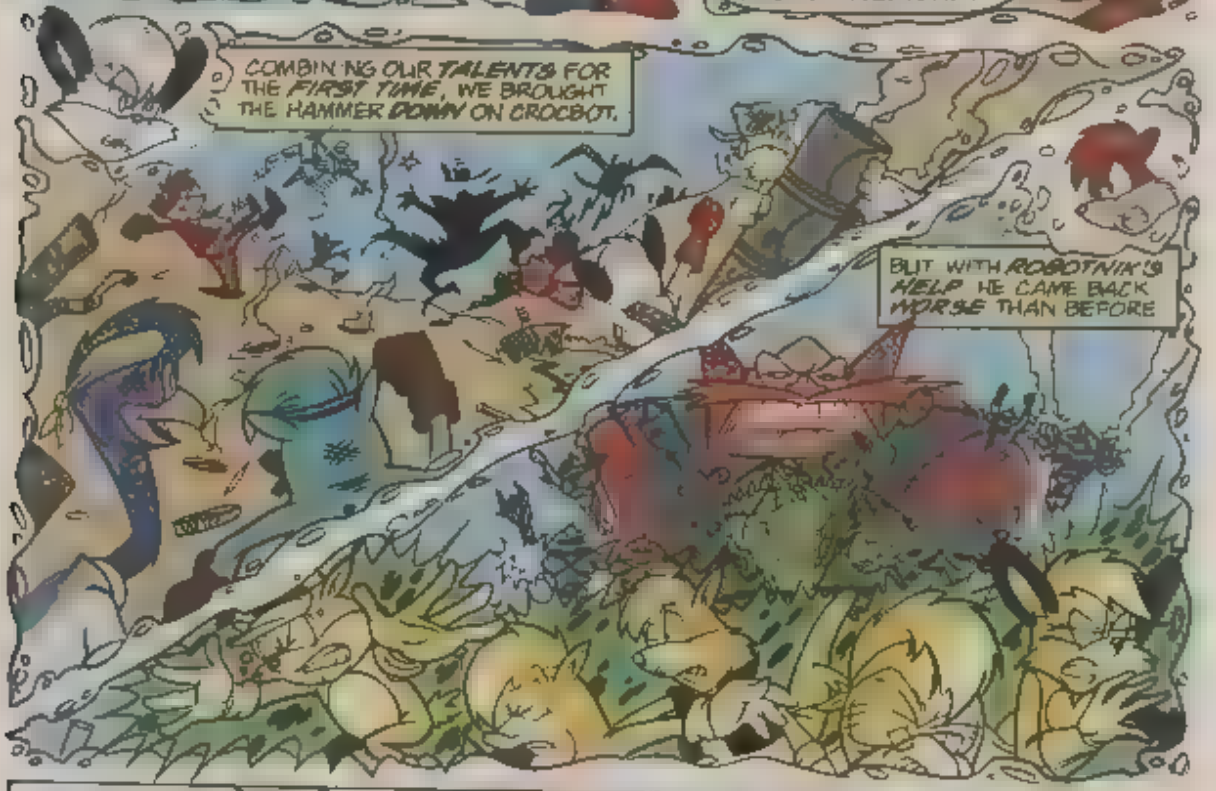

YOU'RE FREE BROTHERS AND SISTERS
GRRR I'D LIKE TO FIND OUT WHO SET UP THIS HORROR SHOW!
I KNOW.
WHO ARE YOU?

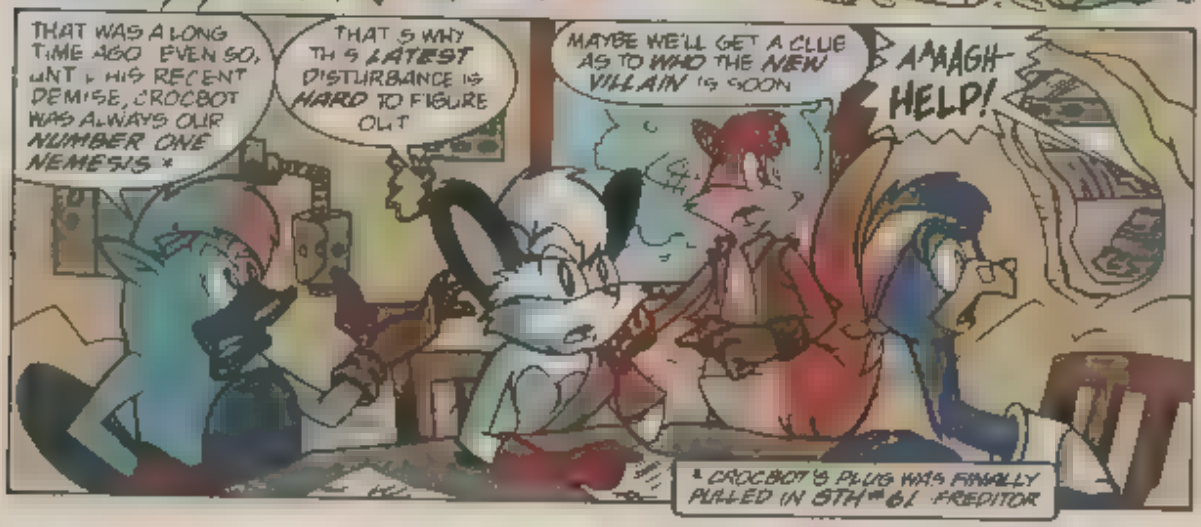

I'M WOMBAT STU AND I'VE BEEN KEEPING DETAILED NOTES ON THIS OPERATION AND THE THING BEHIND IT

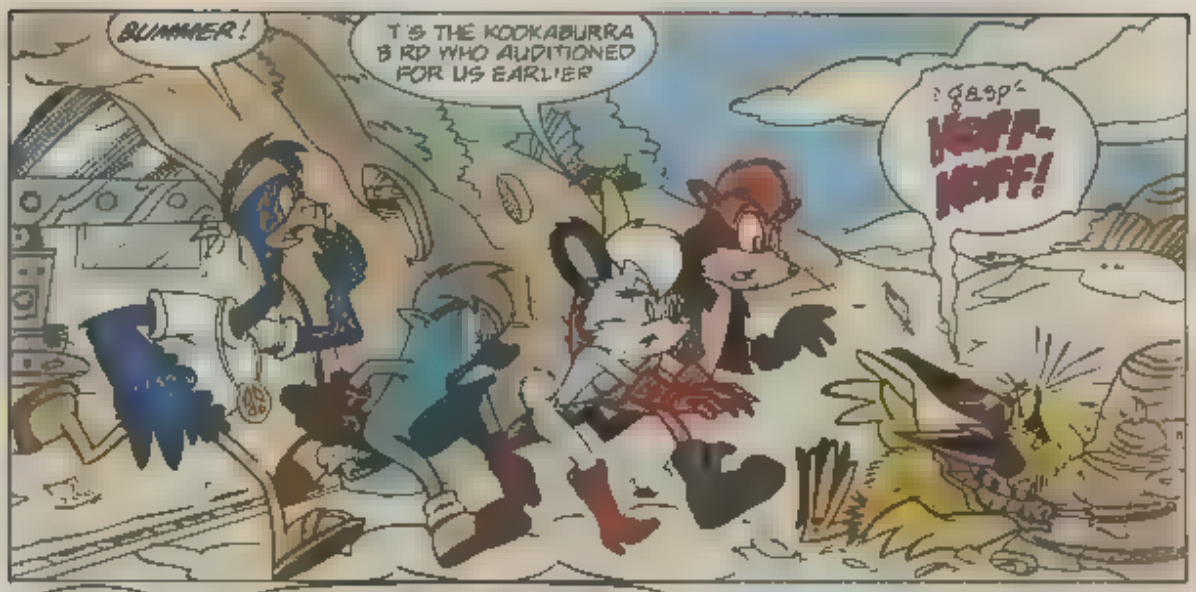

WOMBAT STU FILLED US IN ON THE MECHA-MEGALOMANIAC WHO WAS SECRETLY BUILDING AN EVIL EMPIRE IN DOWNUNDA. THE BEAST'S NAME WAS
CROCBOT! HIS HEADQUARTERS ISN'T FAR FROM HERE
LEAD THE WAY, PARTNER!

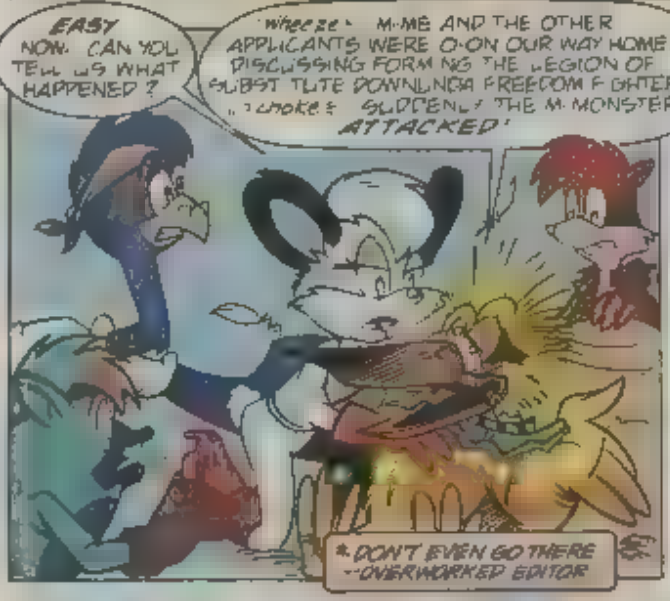

THAT'S CROCBOT'S HEADQUARTERS
PRETTY NASTY LOOKING, BUT THE FOUR OF US CAN HANDLE IT
MAKE THAT "THE FIVE OF US" AND IT'S A DEAL
WHO SAID THAT?

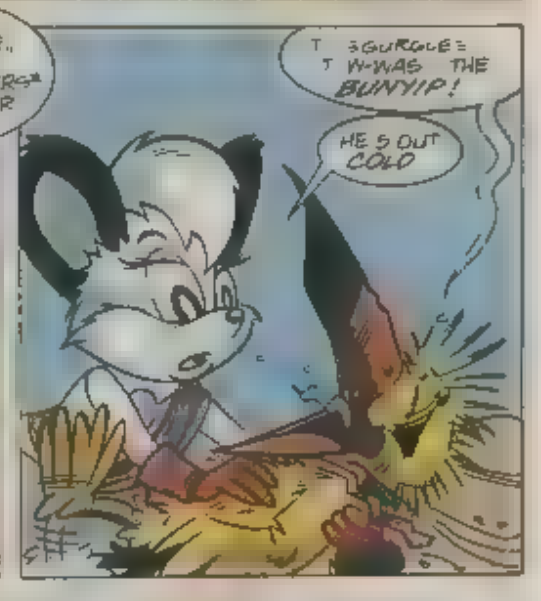

I'M BARBY KOALA, FEMALE MERCENARY! I WAS ABOUT TO TAKE CROCBOT ON ALONE BUT I'LL GLADLY JOIN YOUR TEAM
WE HAVEN'T OFFICIALLY FORMED A TEAM YET
NOW'S AS GOOD A TIME AS ANY!
WE'LL CALL OURSELVES THE DOWNUNDA FREEDOM FIGHTERS!

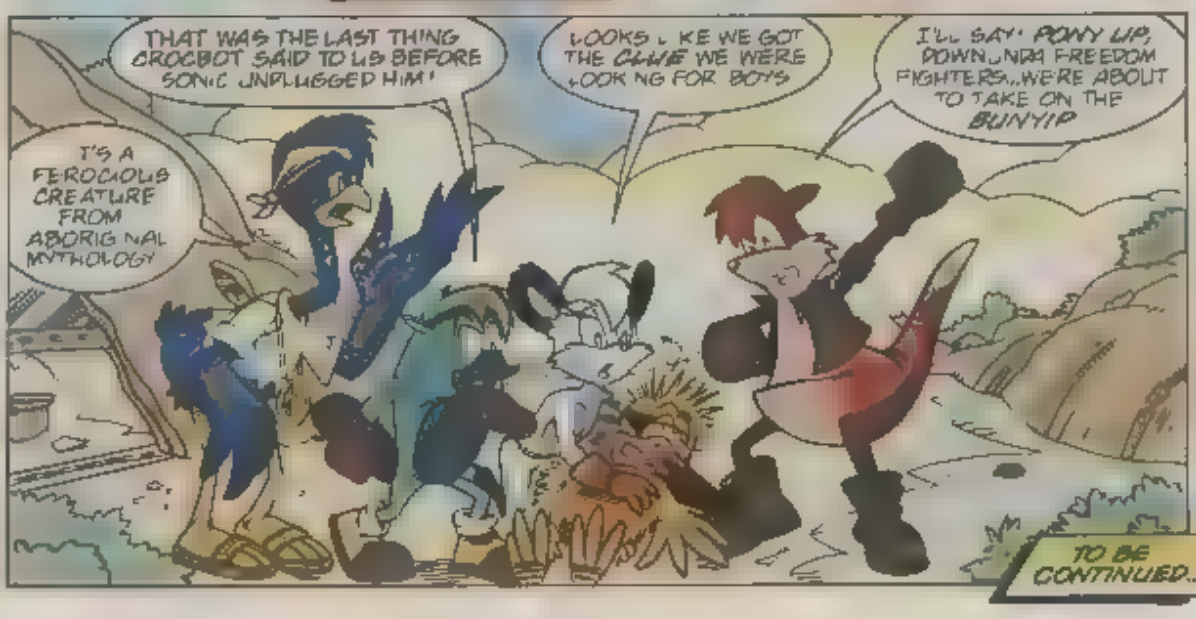

COMBINING OUR TALENTS FOR THE FIRST TIME, WE BROUGHT THE HAMMER DOWN ON CROCBOT.
BUT WITH ROBOTNIK'S HELP HE CAME BACK WORSE THAN BEFORE


THAT WAS A LONG TIME AGO. EVEN SO, UNTIL HIS RECENT DEMISE, CROCBOT WAS ALWAYS OUR NUMBER ONE NEMESIS *
THAT'S WHY THIS LATEST DISTURBANCE IS HARD TO FIGURE OUT
MAYBE WE'LL GET A CLUE AS TO WHO THE NEW VILLAIN IS SOON
AAAAGH HELP!
* CROCBOT'S PLUG WAS FINALLY PULLED IN STH #61 FREDITOR


BUMMER!
T'S THE KOOKABURRA B RD WHO AUDITIONED FOR US EARLIER
(GASP)
HOFF-HOFF!


EASY NOW. CAN YOU TELL US WHAT HAPPENED?
(wheeze) M-ME AND THE OTHER APPLICANTS WERE O-ON OUR WAY HOME.. DISCUSSING FORM NG THE LEGION OF SUBST TUTE DOWNUNDA FREEDOM F GHTERS* ..(choke) SUDDENLY THE M-MONSTER ATTACKED!
*DON'T EVEN GO THERE --OVERWORKED EDITOR


T (GURGLE) T W-WAS THE BUNYIP!
HE'S OUT COLD

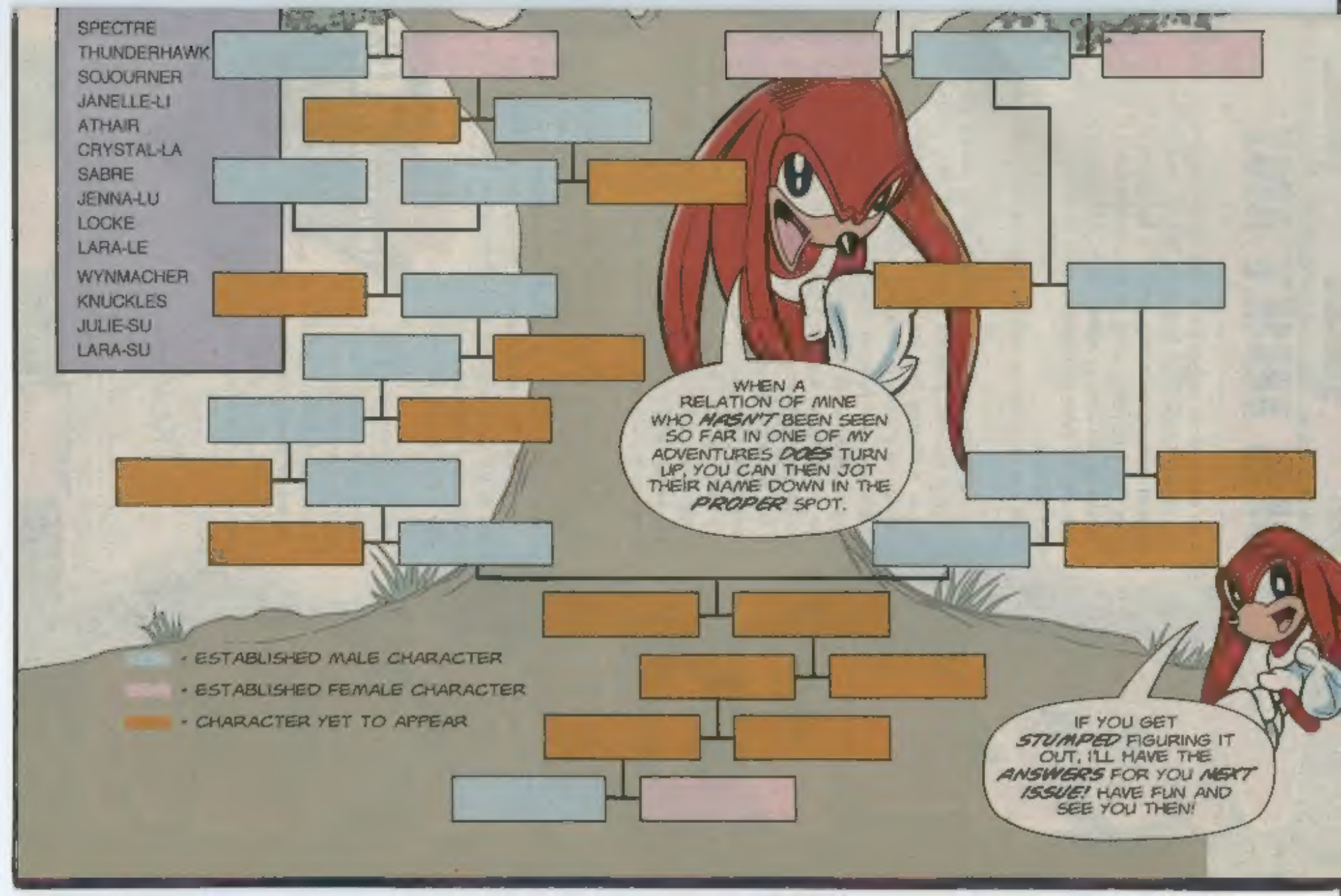

THAT WAS THE LAST THING CROCBOT SAID TO US BEFORE SONIC UNPLUGGED HIM!
LOOKS LIKE WE GOT THE CLUE WE WERE LOOK NG FOR BOYS
I'LL SAY! POWY UP, DOWNUNDA FREEDOM FIGHTERS..WE'RE ABOUT TO TAKE ON THE BUNYIP
T'S A FEROCIOUS CREATURE FROM ABORIG NAL MYTHOLOGY
TO BE CONTINUED..

FOR SOME TIME NOW, EVERYONE'S BEEN ASKING JUST WHO'S *RELATED* TO WHOM IN *MY FAMILY*, SO I PUT TOGETHER THIS *SCORECARD* FOR ALL YOU READERS TO KEEP TRACK WITH.

THOSE OF YOU WHO'VE BEEN PAYING ATTENTION SHOULD KNOW WHICH *NAME* FROM THE *COLUMN* ON THE *LEFT* GOES WITH WHICH *BOX* ON THE *TREE*.

BUT I'LL BE A SPORT ABOUT IT AND TELL YOU THE *YELLOW BOXES* ARE FOR CHARACTERS *YET TO* [redacted]

JORDANN
KAYLA-LA
EDMUND
DMITRI
STEPPENWOLF
MENNIKER
MOONWATCHER
HARLAN
MORITORI REX
REMBRANDT
AARON
JORDAN
LUGER
MERINDA
MARISU
MATTHIAS
KRAGOK
LIENDA
HAWKING
SONIA RA
TOBOR
VON-CA


SPECTRE
THUNDERHAWK
SOJOURNER
JANELLE-LI
ATHAIR
CRYSTAL-LA
SABRE
JENNA-LU
LOCKE
LARA-LE
WYNMACHER
KNUCKLES
JULIE-SU
LARA-SU
WHEN A RELATION OF MINE WHO HASN'T BEEN SEEN SO FAR IN ONE OF MY ADVENTURES DOES TURN UP, YOU CAN THEN JOT THEIR NAME DOWN IN THE PROPER SPOT.
• ESTABLISHED MALE CHARACTER
• ESTABLISHED FEMALE CHARACTER
• CHARACTER YET TO APPEAR
IF YOU GET STUMPED FIGURING IT OUT, I'LL HAVE THE ANSWERS FOR YOU NEXT ISSUE! HAVE FUN AND SEE YOU THEN!

SONIC-GRAMS

THIS JUST IN!

I can imagine all the longtime readers having finished the stories in this issue are now scratching their heads saying, "That was good, but what happened to the regular on-going storylines?" A fair question, to be sure. When I was a kid reading comics, the editor would explain it as the "Dreaded Deadline Doom". It sounded bad, but it also didn't explain much. That one phrase alone covered a lot of sins.

In this case, the answer can simply be summed up like this: Life happens.

Because of the time lag between when the stories are produced and when you get to read them, if someone gets sick, or moves, or gets married, or does one of the many things that can interrupt a work schedule, more often than not, it usually can be handled without causing disruption in the Archie production department or any of the readers noticing. However, at some point earlier this year, I required medical attention beyond what is usually necessary to treat a flu or an upset stomach, and it was definitely going to affect my workload, particularly on the Knuckles stories. At that point, when I informed editor Justin Gabrie of the steps I was taking to keep things going, he suggested that I take a break and work at a slower pace until I had a chance to recover. We both looked at it as a good thing in that it would allow Justin a chance to experiment a bit with the book and I would have the time to figure out how to work ideas into the stories that I hadn't had the chance to so far.

As a result, you now get to see this nifty 2-part story that was originally being planned for a future issue of SONIC SUPER SPECIAL, as well as other goodies we have in store over the next two issues before things get back to normal with SONIC #106. (Normal in the sense that Karl will continue with the lead feature and Dawn and I will be back on Knuckles, but we'll still be pulling rabbits out of our hats to make it worth your while.)

Before anyone asks, yes, I'm now back to my normal self, feeling really great, hard at work on future issues of this series, and in the midst of planning a relocation from the east coast to the west coast. As I said, life happens. Take Care.

KEN—

Send letters to:
SONIC-GRAMS #103
c/o Archie Comic Publications, Inc.
P.O. Box #419
Mamaroneck, NY 10543-0419
E-MAIL:
Sonic@kenpenders.com
WEBSITE: www.archiecomics.com
SEGA WEBSITE: www.sega.com

Note: Due to the overwhelming amount of e-mail and snail mail, it is impossible for us to reply personally to each and every message. However, your opinions are important to us and each message will be read. Also, due to space limitations, some correspondence may be edited. *Thanks for understanding!*

COMING ATTRACTIONS

No. 104

NEXT ISSUE: What else would you expect but the stunning conclusion to this issue's saga (still written by Mike Gallagher)? Because Jim Valentino's schedule didn't allow for him to finish things up, and I was on the road in recovery, Dave Best and I stepped in to handle the art. Plus, Mike G. and Dave Marsak return with more of the Downunda Freedom Fighters, as well as more fun feature pages. Where else could you find this much fun and excitement, eh?

SPECIAL NOTE: Just when we thought everyone received their proper acknowledgments, we finally received our copies of SONIC #100, and somehow two glaring omissions happened between the time we sent our copy to press and when the book was printed. Made to our embarrassment, artist Scott Shaw, letters page designer Joe Pepitone and Heroic Age somehow fell off the list. For that we're truly sorry. We hope this makes up for it, and promise to get you guys in the next time we do this.

AND NOW, IT'S TIME TO CHECK THIS MONTH'S MAIL:

Dear Sonic Team,

According to the latest issue of Wizard ("The Comics Magazine"— #119, August 2001), Mina might not be a major player in Sonic's romantic life in the future. On page 85 in the Datebook (news/release Calendar) section, an SA-style pic of Sonic is listed in the square Saturday, July 7th, accompanied by the caption: "Sonic the Hedgehog #100 (Archie Comics) Sonic and Princess Sally reunite. www.archicomics.com".

Needless to say, I was surprised. Not only by the news, but the fact that I can count with the fingers on one hand the number of times that Wizard has proved "anything" regarding the Sonic comic. In fact, the first thing I did when I bought my first issue of Wizard was to look for Ken Penders's and Pat Spaziante's names in the Top 10 Winners/Artists and Creator Index sections. I've never seen them listed, but at least the Sonic comics ARE listed in the monthly Price Guides!

If the info printed was true, maybe we can expect Archie to take more fan suggestions to heart in the future (since it was likely the fan reaction to Mina that prompted Sonic and Sally's [hopeful] future unification)...

MELEDIN-TUBE

Unfortunately, Mike WIZARD has yet to really acknowledge the contribution the SONIC series has made to the comics industry in general, so that its popularity exceeds that of most books they feature, but if enough of the readers write and let them know, maybe they'll get a clue, you think? As for the Mina-Sonic-Sally triangle, I would hate to say that's over and done with, as Karl may or may not have a surprise in store in some upcoming adventure.

Dear Justin,

Alright, alright. So I couldn't stay away. Too many memories. SONIC #100 starts off with the core Freedom Fighters striking a pose with the covers of the past 99 regular series issues in the background. Not as flashy as S#25's silver or S#50's gold borders, but still nifty.

Starting with the Sonic story, Ron Lim does a decent job this time around. His portrayal of Cheddermond's demise on page 1, the moment of silence for Sally on page 7, and the down-right creepy end of Nate Morgan on page 17 are all excellent bits. You can see bits and pieces of Fry and Spaz (more of the former) here and there throughout the story. Sally looks odd for the entire story (more vulpine than ground squirrel) and Rotor's head is just plain wrong. But all things considered, Mr. Lim got the job done looking good, and best of all, it conveyed the sense of the story very well. As someone who was critical of Ron Lim in the past, that's high praise.

As for the story, I must be honest. I was fairly dreading #100. Boy was I happily surprised. I found myself getting excited as the story unfolded. I wanted to know what was going to happen to whom, and I was totally taken off-guard when Sally FWAAAASHHed Kodos. The dialogue tripped a little here and there, but all-in-all, it took me back to the glory days. This issue was a far cry better than recent months, especially with a number of plot lines tied up.

Moving along to the Knuckles segment, Mr. Penders does a decent job throughout the book. There is no particular rise or drop in quality. To be honest, I haven't been his biggest fan when it comes to Furry art. But he can draw humans far better than I, so I have no room to talk. Considering how he was first drawn, Mecha-Dimitri is on-model and with enough insane detail to satisfy me. The only qualms I really have are Green-Knuckles's bony knees, Inbur's eyes on page 8, and Kommissar's proportions on page 3. I don't know what bugs me about her on page 3, the just does. Regardless of these few points, the quality is consistent and it gets the story across.

This chapter is a big turning point in the life of our favorite Guardian, and it's done in a quick, compact, neat little story. I come away from this feeling like something had been accomplished. The only thing that really bugged me was Green-Knuckles and Julie-Su's hug on page 5. They're on the bridge of the enemy craft. Kommissar has already made it quite clear she has an itchy trigger-finger and her sights are on her half-sister. Mecha-Dimitri is obviously using the ex-DMer to play Green-Knuckles like a harp, and yet they're allowed to hug and exchange terms of endearment. I just can't see it that way. Then again, with Mecha-Dimitri wanting to play Green- Knuckles to his favor, maybe showering him with gifts (Sa, the F1-inhabitants) was his plan all along. I don't know. I just don't know. In any event, I'll be checking out the next issue.

IAN POTTO

I had to condense your letter for reasons of space, Ian, but I trust the salient points came through. You were far from alone in your praise of SONIC #100, as the next letter will testify.

Dear Sonic-grams,

THE COVER: The colors could use a bit of lightening, especially on our friend Antoine there. Bunnie looks, in one word, awesome, as does our two-tailed kawaii kitsune, Tails. Sally's hand looks more like a balloon with pencils stuck out from it, and Sonic looks like the patented Spaz- cool cg Sonic. The background is a grayscale tiled version of past issues. You can see the SONIC #25 cover in the center. Look on it and see how much Spaz has changed. RATING: 95

SONIC STORY: It's set up as I expected it to be. It's reminiscent of the set-up in SONIC #99--it's filled with scenes that cut to different people. It makes it rather hard to figure out what happened to each person... or, furry/overlander. There's lots of cleaning up. Kodos and Arachnus are dead; the Robians are back, but they'll be along the sidelines. Nate is a robot, presumably, and the sword is back. It took, basically, a year to get it back. This arc will be known as the "Sword of Acorns" arc, lasting from SONIC #88-SONIC #100. Everyone in this issue served a good purpose. It exceeded my expectations. RATING: an easy 90

SONIC ART: Ron Lim has a little more emotion. Nate looks scared throughout the story, as he should, but Sonic is, not emotionless through the pseudo-death sequence. Robotnik looked sadistic when he was supposed to, surprised on page 11, and Sally looked rightly ticked off at Sonic throughout the whole story. Ron Lim's art is certainly better. RATING: 80

KNUCKLES STORY: It's a turning point. It's paced to all of its ability, actually, and Knuckles turns into the official ULTIMATE VILLAIN. Tobor and Kragok die. There isn't much more to it, actually. I liked this story. RATING: 90

KNUCKLES ART: It looks identical to last issue's. The unnecessary Photoshop blur kills Tobor and Kragok in mid-air, however. RATING: 85

BAINE

Cover illustration by Patrick Spaziante and Nelson Blake
with colors and separations by Josh O. Ray. Edit, page layout & design by Jeeper.

SONIC CHECKLIST

SUBSCRIPTIONS (SON)

- ☐ **SONIC** (4 issue subscription) $5.00 ($5.75 - CAN)
- ☐ **SONIC** (8 issue subscription) $10.00 ($11.50 - CAN)

BACK ISSUES

SONIC & KNUCKLES COLLECTOR SETS

1996

- ☐ **SONIC** (HCS) Issue No's 30-41... $23.99

1997

- ☐ **SONIC** (HCS) Issue No's 42-53... $19.99
- ☐ **KNUCKLES** (KCS) Issue No's 1-7... $11.99

1998

- ☐ **SONIC** (HCS) Issue No's 54-65... $20.99
- ☐ **KNUCKLES** (KCS) Issue No's 8-19... $20.99

1999

- ☐ **SONIC** (HCS) Issue No's 66-77... $19.99
- ☐ **KNUCKLES** (KCS) Issue No's 20-31... $19.99

MINI SERIES

- ☐ **SONIC END GAME SERIES** (END) (4 issues #47 - #48 - #49 - #50) $7.00 ($8.00 - CAN)

MINI SERIES (Continued)

- ☐ **SONIC'S FRIENDLY NEMESIS KNUCKLES** (SNK) (3 issue mini-series) $6.00 ($7.00 - CAN)
- ☐ **TAILS 3 ISSUE MINI-SERIES** (TLS) $6.00 ($7.00 - CAN)
- ☐ **SONIC QUEST "THE DEATH EGG SAGA"** (SDS) (3 issue mini-series) $6.00 ($7.00 - CAN)
- ☐ **PRINCESS SALLY** (PS) (3 issue mini-series) $6.00 ($7.00 - CAN)
- ☐ **KNUCKLES "THE DARK LEGION"** (ENC) (3 issues #1 - #2 - #3) $4.50 ($5.50 - CAN)
- ☐ **KNUCKLES "LOST PARADISE"** (ENC) (3 issues #4 - #5 - #6) $4.50 ($5.50 - CAN)
- ☐ **KNUCKLES "DARK VENGEANCE"** (ENC) (3 issues #7 - #8 - #9) $4.50 ($5.50 - CAN)
- ☐ **NIGHTS INTO DREAMS ORIGINAL MINI-SERIES** (NID) (3 issues #1 - #2 - #3) $4.50 ($5.00 - CAN)
- ☐ **NIGHTS INTO DREAMS MINI-SERIES** (NID) (3 issues #4 - #5 - #6) $4.50 ($5.00 - CAN)

SPECIALS

(48 pg. Special) $3.00 ($3.50 - CAN)

- ☐ **SONIC & KNUCKLES** (SAK)
- ☐ **SONIC IN YOUR FACE** (BIF)
- ☐ **SONIC BLAST** (BOB)
- ☐ **SONIC CHAOTIX** (CHX)
- ☐ **SONIC TRIPLE TROUBLE** (STT)
- ☐ **SONIC & KNUCKLES MECHA MADNESS** (SMM)
- ☐ **SUPER SONIC VS HYPER KNUCKLES** (SVK)
- ☐ **SONIC LIVE!** (SLS)
- ☐ **#1 BATTLE ROYAL** (BSQ1)
- ☐ **#2 BRAVE NEW WORLD** (BSQ2)
- ☐ **#3 SONIC FIRSTS** (BSQ3)
- ☐ **#4 RETURN OF THE KING** (BSQ4)
- ☐ **#5 SONIC KIDS** (BSQ5)
- ☐ **#6 SONIC DIRECTOR'S CUT** (BSQ6)
- ☐ **#7 IMAGE/SONIC CROSSOVER** (BSQ7)
- ☐ **#8 SALLY MOON** (BSQ8)
- ☐ **#9 SONIC KIDS#2** (BSQ9)
- ☐ **#10 SONIC/SABRINA** (BSQ10)

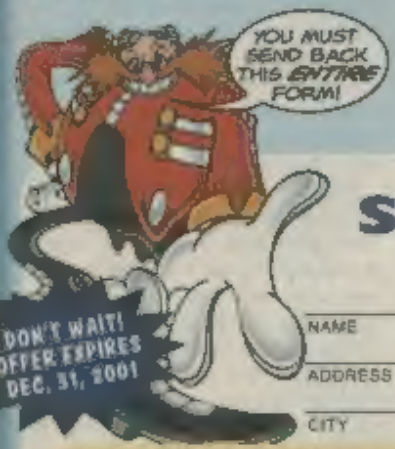
SONIC SUPER SPECIALS (SSQ)

(48 pg. Specials) $2.50 ($3.00 - CAN)

- ☐ **#11 SONIC CO-STARS**
- ☐ **#12 TURN ABOUT HEROS**
- ☐ **#13 DREAMCAST ADAPTATION**
- ☐ **#14 SONIC STEW**
- ☐ **#15 BATTLE WITH NAUGUS**

TRADE PAPERBACK

- ☐ **SONIC "FIRSTS"** (SGN) $6.00 ($6.00 - CAN)



ARCHIE COMIC PUBLICATIONS, INC.

SONIC CHECKLIST

P.O. Box #573, Mamaroneck, NY 10543-0573

NAME _____ AGE _____ MALE ☐ FEMALE ☐

ADDRESS _____

CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP+4 _____ - _____

DAYTIME PHONE # _____

TALLY YOUR ORDER HERE

$_____ + $_____ = $_____

SUBSCRIPTION SUBTOTAL — BACK ISSUES SUBTOTAL — TOTAL AMOUNT

☐ VISA ☐ MASTERCARD

EXP DATE ___ / ___ (MO. YR.)

SIGNATURE _____

AVAILABLE IN U.S. & CANADA ONLY. All Canadian orders must be made payable in U.S. funds. PLEASE ALLOW 6-8 WEEKS DELIVERY.
YOU CAN MAKE A COPY OF THIS PAGE IF YOU DON'T WANT TO TEAR YOUR BOOK.

8031